

Amendments to the Specification:

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 4, line 24, with the following redlined paragraph:

Further characteristics and advantages of the invention will become clear from the description that follows, which is given purely as a non limitative example with reference to the attached drawings, where:

- Figure 1 illustrates a data configuration example that can be used within the scope of the present invention,
- Figure 2 illustrates the general sequence of the compression process flow within the scope of the present invention,
- Figure 3 schematically illustrates the organization of data that is suitable for being input to a system in accordance with the invention,
- Figures 4 to 10 schematically illustrate the sequence of the subsequent processing phases according to the invention and used by the compression function,
- Figures 11 and 12 respectively illustrate different options of representing the data in compressed format, depending on whether execution of the compression operation was unsuccessful or successful,
- Figures 13 to 16 illustrate various examples of possible outcomes of data compression, with particular attention to the relative compression gain factors that can be achieved,
- Figure 17 is a schematic diagram of one decompression process according to the invention,
- Figures 18 to 20 schematically illustrate the sequence of the subsequent processing phases according to the invention and used by the decompression function,
- Figure 21 summarizes the general structure of a system in accordance with the invention, and
- Figure 22, including the three overlays respectively indicated as a), b) and c), illustrates the application of the solution in accordance with the invention to the treatment of video signals.